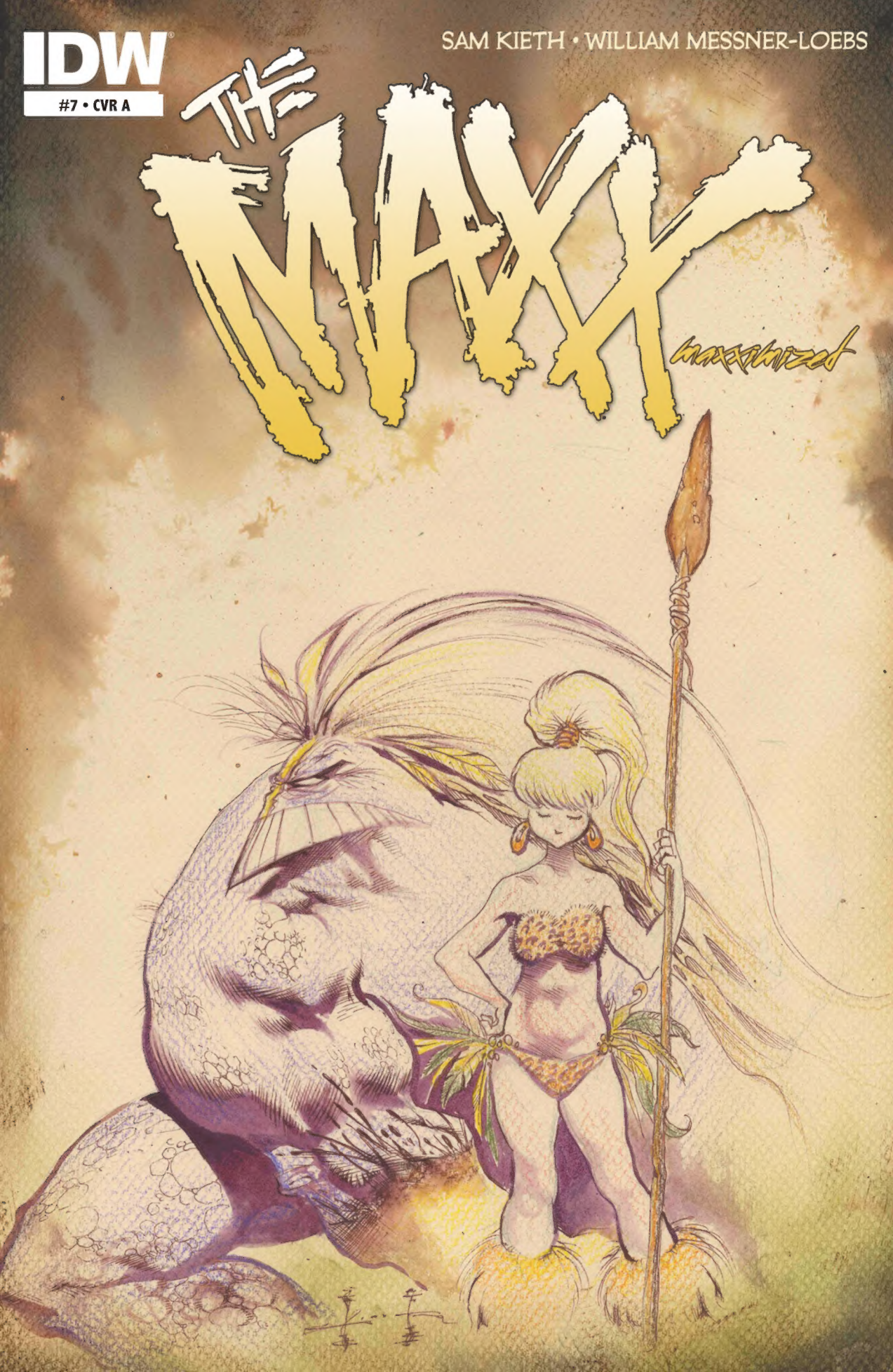
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SAM KIETH • WILLIAM MESSNER-LOEBS
THE MAXX
maxximized

THE MAXX MAXXIMIZED

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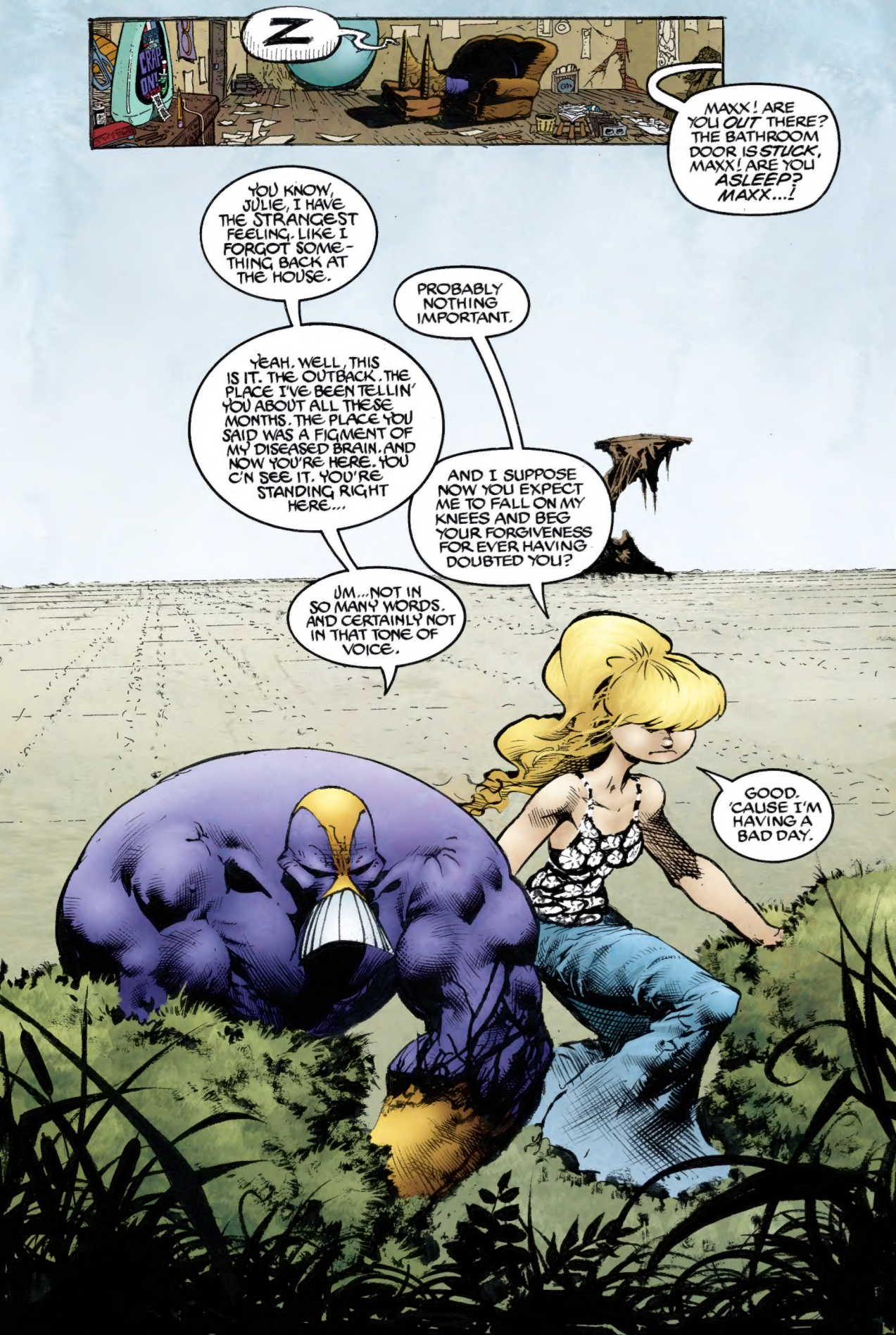
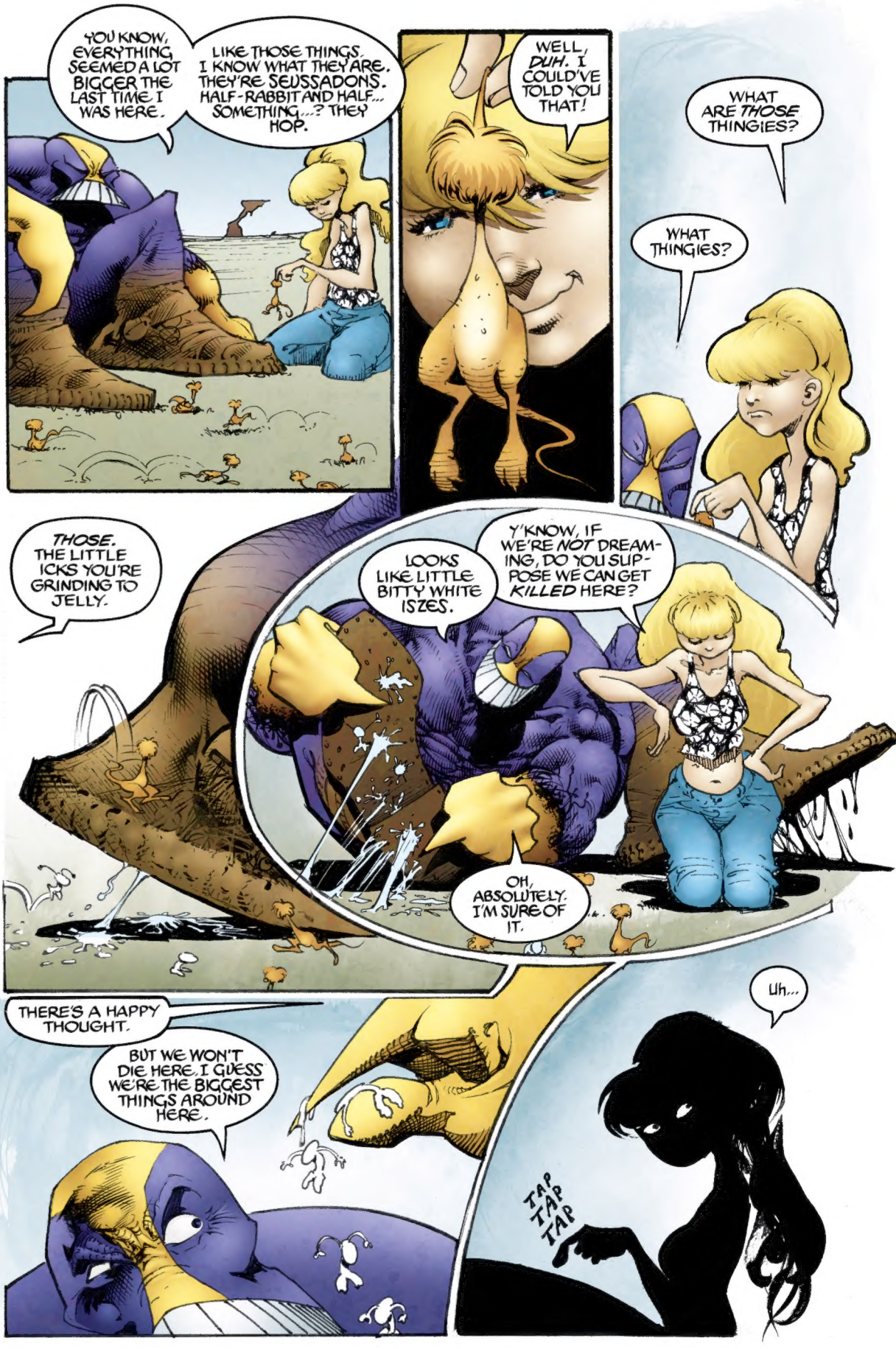
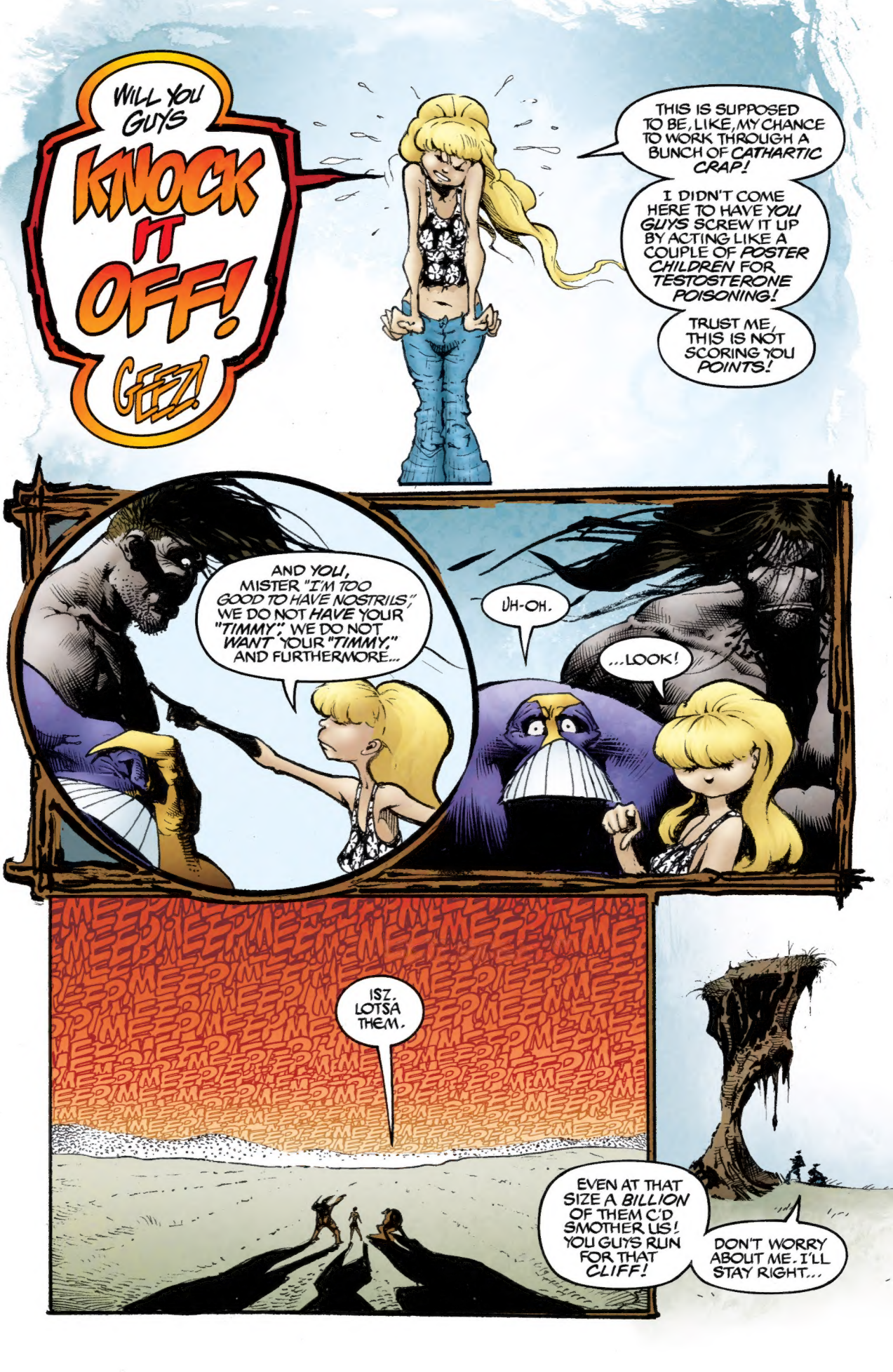
MEDICAL EXAMINER'S LAB.
DO YOU ♪ FEEL LIKE WE DO...OOOH... ♫
'CORDIN' TO THE POLICE, THIS GOOD OL' BOY'S STREET NAME WAS TEEGO...
THEY FOUND 'IM IN A BOX IN SOME ALLEY... PROB'LY EXPLAINS WHY 'IS CLOTHES SMELL SO BAD!
THESE DEAD FELLAS IS SUPPOSED T'BE PEELED WHEN I GET 'EM!
S'FUNNY... ALMOST SEEMS LIKE 'IS BODY'S CHANGIN' SHAPE TH' CLOSER I GET T' TH' SKIN--
--WHAT TH'--!
THAT--THAT AIN'T RIGHT! THAT AIN'T WHAT HE LOOKED LIKE WHEN HE WAS BRUNG IN!
IT'S--
--IT'S--
--UNNATURAL!
Eh?
CRREEEEEAAK
MEEP!

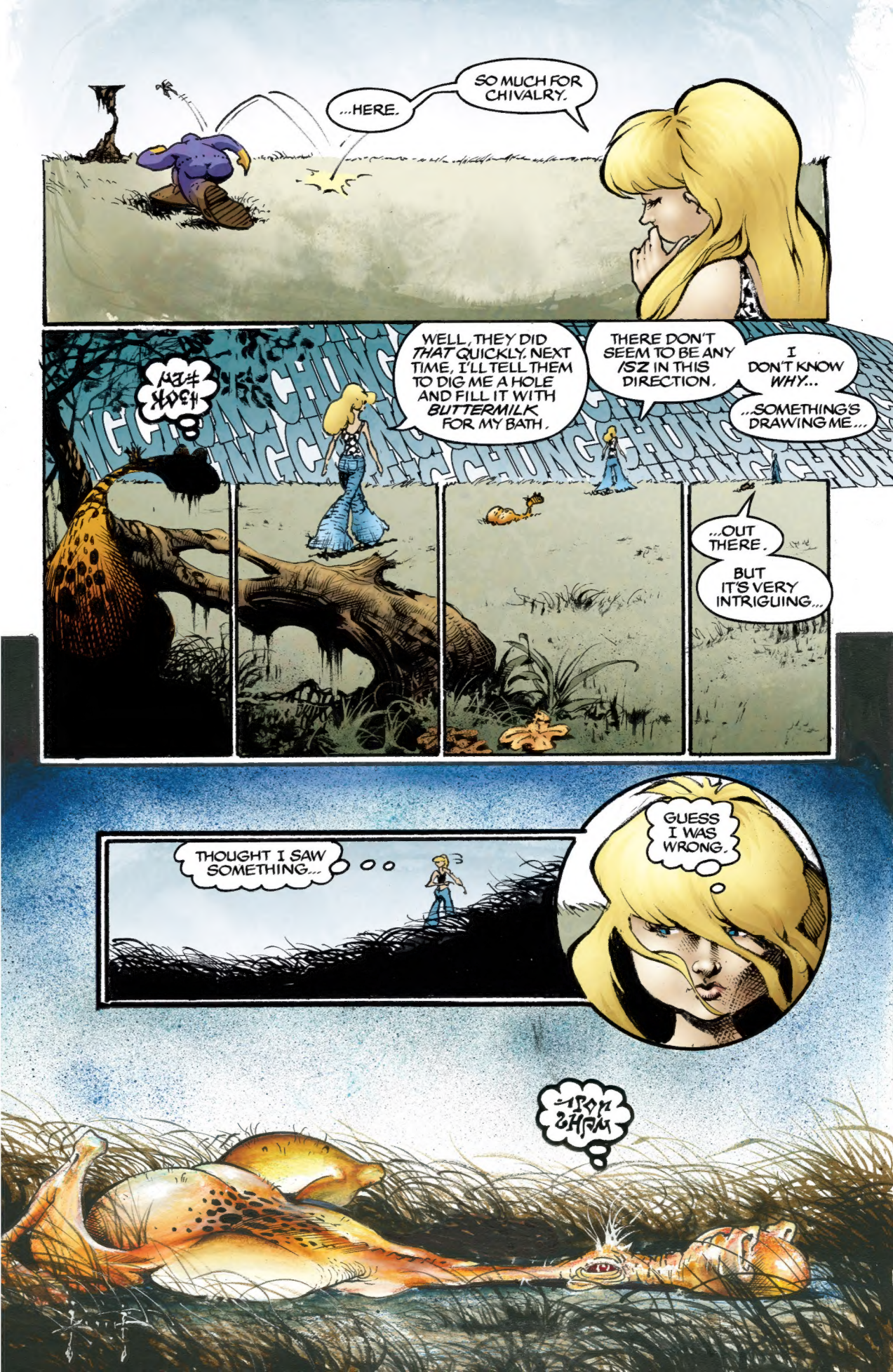

Z
MAXX! ARE YOU *OUT* THERE? THE BATHROOM DOOR IS *STUCK*, MAXX! ARE YOU *ASLEEP*? MAXX...!
YOU KNOW, JULIE, I HAVE THE STRANGEST FEELING. LIKE I FORGOT SOMETHING BACK AT THE HOUSE.
PROBABLY NOTHING IMPORTANT.
YEAH. WELL, THIS IS IT. THE OUTBACK. THE PLACE I'VE BEEN TELLIN' YOU ABOUT ALL THESE MONTHS. THE PLACE YOU SAID WAS A FIGMENT OF MY DISEASED BRAIN. AND NOW YOU'RE HERE. YOU C'N SEE IT. YOU'RE STANDING RIGHT HERE...
AND I SUPPOSE NOW YOU EXPECT ME TO FALL ON MY KNEES AND BEG YOUR FORGIVENESS FOR EVER HAVING DOUBTED YOU?
UM...NOT IN SO MANY WORDS. AND CERTAINLY NOT IN THAT TONE OF VOICE.
GOOD. 'CAUSE I'M HAVING A BAD DAY.


YOU KNOW, EVERYTHING SEEMED A LOT BIGGER THE LAST TIME I WAS HERE.
LIKE THOSE THINGS. I KNOW WHAT THEY ARE. THEY'RE SEUSSADONS. HALF-RABBIT AND HALF... SOMETHING...? THEY HOP.
WELL, DUH. I COULD'VE TOLD YOU THAT!
WHAT ARE THOSE THINGIES?
WHAT THINGIES?
THOSE. THE LITTLE ICKS YOU'RE GRINDING TO JELLY.
LOOKS LIKE LITTLE BITTY WHITE ISZES.
Y'KNOW, IF WE'RE NOT DREAMING, DO YOU SUPPOSE WE CAN GET KILLED HERE?
OH, ABSOLUTELY. I'M SURE OF IT.
THERE'S A HAPPY THOUGHT.
BUT WE WON'T DIE HERE. I GUESS WE'RE THE BIGGEST THINGS AROUND HERE.
TAP TAP TAP
UH...

GUESS AGAIN.

TIMMY! WHERE'S TIMMY?
HE WAS MY ONLY FRIEND AND NOW HE'S GONE! AND YOU KNOW SOMETHING! YOU TOOK HIM!
GIVE HIM BACK!
HEY!
WELL, JULIE'S MY ONLY FRIEND! AND IF YOU HURT HER I'LL...


WILL YOU GUYS
KNOCK IT OFF!
GEEZ!
THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE, LIKE, MY CHANCE TO WORK THROUGH A BUNCH OF CATHARTIC CRAP!
I DIDN'T COME HERE TO HAVE YOU GUYS SCREW IT UP BY ACTING LIKE A COUPLE OF POSTER CHILDREN FOR TESTOSTERONE POISONING!
TRUST ME, THIS IS NOT SCORING YOU POINTS!
AND YOU, MISTER "I'M TOO GOOD TO HAVE NOSTRILS," WE DO NOT HAVE YOUR "TIMMY"; WE DO NOT WANT YOUR "TIMMY." AND FURTHERMORE...
UH-OH.
...LOOK!
ISZ. LOTSA THEM.
EVEN AT THAT SIZE A BILLION OF THEM C'D SMOTHER US! YOU GUYS RUN FOR THAT CLIFF!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. I'LL STAY RIGHT...


...HERE.
SO MUCH FOR CHIVALRY.
CHUNG CHUNG CHUNG CHUNG CHUNG CHUNG
WELL, THEY DID THAT QUICKLY. NEXT TIME, I'LL TELL THEM TO DIG ME A HOLE AND FILL IT WITH BUTTERMILK FOR MY BATH.
THERE DON'T SEEM TO BE ANY SZ IN THIS DIRECTION.
I DON'T KNOW WHY...
...SOMETHING'S DRAWING ME...
...OUT THERE.
BUT IT'S VERY INTRIGUING...
THOUGHT I SAW SOMETHING...
GUESS I WAS WRONG.
WHAT?

THE ELMER A. CRAFT HIGH SCHOOL ART DEPARTMENT.
I HATE INVENTORY. I HATE MRS. BRUSSLES.
ONE STUPID BOX... TWO STUPID BOXES... THREE...
LIFE SUCKS, HUH?
DOWN HERE, KIDDO.
HI, SARAH. I'M A MAGIC PIECE OF TALKING CLAY.
RIGHT.
NO, REALLY.
I CAN HELP YOU IF YOU SNEAK ME INTO JULIE WINTERS' HOUSE.
YOU KNOW ABOUT JULIE?
YOU MUST GET AROUND FOR A PIECE OF CLAY.
WELL, YEAH...FOR A PIECE OF CLAY.
WHY SHOULD I BETRAY JULIE FOR YOU?
"I THINK IT'S PRETTY IMPORTANT FOR A WRITER TO KNOW JUST HOW ROTTEN SHE CAN BE...".
GET OUT OF MY HEAD!
CLAY
YOU'LL BE BACK...AND WE CAN TALK AND PLAY GAMES, I DON'T KNOW...

AND ON THE STAIRWELL LEADING TO JULIE WINTERS' APARTMENT...
TIMMY.
TIMMY... WAIT.
TIMMY... WHERE DID YOU GO...?
YOU! WHAT DID YOU DO WITH...?
BUBBLE BATH
CRAP-ON!
STYLE
SUDDENLY, EVERYTHING CHANGES!

I AM THE MAXX! HE WHO IS PROTECTOR OF THIS LAND!
AND YOU ARE A POWERFULLY BUILT STRANGER, WHO HAS COME TO CHALLENGE MAXX, FOR WE ARE THE TWO BIGGEST CREATURES IN THIS WORLD!
GUESS AGAIN.
ANY CLUE AS TO WHO THIS GUY IS?
HE WOULD BE AN ISZ, EXCEPT THEY ARE SMALL. AND LIVE UNDERGROUND AND ONLY ATTACK IN GROUPS. AND ARE COLORED LIGHT GRAY AND...

RUN! DON'T TALK!
YES, MAXX WILL RUN. MAXX WILL LOSE THIS GIANT ISZ IN THE GRASSLANDS OF HIS BELOVED PANGAEA!
MAXX WILL RACE ACROSS THESE CLIFFS AND PLATEAUS, LEAPING LIKE A POWERFUL GOATFROG!
STAY! MAXX WILL LEAD THE MONSTER AWAY WITH HIS WILDERNESS CUNNING!
BOP!
RIGHT. LIKE THAT'S REALLY GONNA HAPPEN!
I KNOW YOU'RE STILL OUT THERE, MAXX. I CAN HEAR YOU MOVING AROUND.
YOU BETTER BE OUT THERE, MAXX.

SO. DO YOU BRING ALL YOUR DATES TO THIS ABANDONED OVER-PASS, SARAH?

HEH. HEH...

JUST KIDDING.

LOOK, JUST BECAUSE I BROUGHT YOU OUT HERE DOESN'T MEAN I'M GONNA BETRAY HER.

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I WANT TO HURT HER? MAYBE I JUST WANT TO BE HER FRIEND.

YEAH, RIGHT.

WELL, I KNEW THAT WOULDN'T FLY.

OKAY, LET'S CUT THE CRAP, SARAH. YOU GET ME IN THAT HOUSE AND I CAN GET YOU--

SHUT UP! STOP SCREWING WITH MY HEAD!

I KNOW THINGS, SARAH. I KNOW ABOUT THE LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE OF PEOPLE. I KNOW ABOUT THE SECRET FAULT LINES OF THEIR SOULS.

SEE, SARAH, EVERYBODY SNAPS.

LOOK AT YOU...TALKING TO A PIECE OF CLAY.

AND EVERYBODY HAS A SPIRIT FRIEND WHO HELPS THEM OVER THE ROUGH SPOTS.

AN ANIMAL, USUALLY.

YOURS MIGHT BE A HORSE. A HUGE, SPIRITED ARABIAN!

I CAN SEE HIM NOW...PASSING LIKE FIRE THROUGH THE MAGNETIC WALL THAT YOU'VE BUILT AROUND YOUR SOUL.

IT'S BUILT OF ALL THE MEAN, NASTY, NEGATIVE THINGS PEOPLE HAVE SAID ABOUT YOU. THEY'RE JUST IDEAS...WORDS...YOU HEAR THEM LONG ENOUGH, AND EVENTUALLY YOU BUY IT.

BUT SUPPOSE YOU KNOW HOW TO FIND YOUR ANIMAL, THEN IT WILL TEACH YOU HOW TO NAVIGATE THROUGH LIFE, HOW TO

TEAR

DOWN

THAT

WALL!

I CAN LEAD YOU RIGHT TO THAT HORSE, SARAH.

SO, WHEN DO WE GO TO JULIE'S?

MAXX! STOP HIDING AND RUN!
MAXX DOES NOT HIDE! MAXX IS RESTING BENEATH THE DECAYING BODY OF THIS SMALL AIRWHALE!
SWIP
NOW, MAXX RUNS!
GOOD PLAN.
MAXX WILL SEIZE THE SPLIT TAIL OF THIS SLEEPING SCORPION AND...
SWING FOR FREEDOM! EVERY SINEW BURSTING...
HE EXPERTLY JUDGES THE DISTANCE TO THE TREES AND GRABBING A BRANCH...
SPLASH

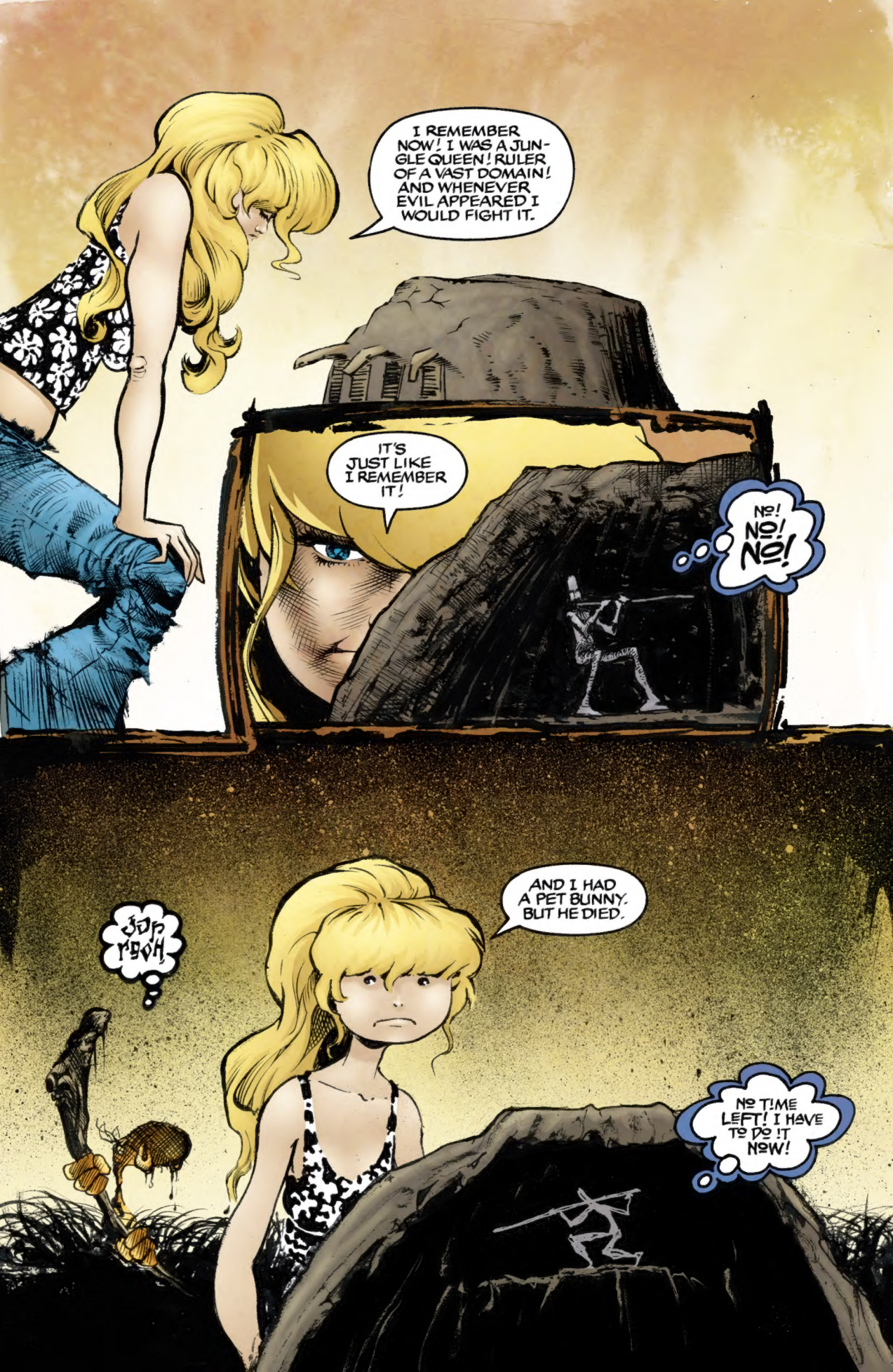
HOW REFRESHING! THE BUBBLING WATERS OF THE MALIJOO... THE SPRING OF LIFE... HAVE REVIVED ME.
NOW IT IS TIME TO END THIS, WITH THE FLASHING BLADE DJARNBAR, WHICH I DRAW FROM THIS STONE!
BACK, MONSTER! MAXX WOULD NOT SLAY YOU, BUT WOULD RATHER BE YOUR TINY FRIEND!
NO MATTER THE PROVOCATION I WILL NOT... OH, HELL!
BAD ISZ!
EAT STEEL!
HE PUSHED MAXX TOO FAR!
WILL YOU RUN?
Y'KNOW, MAXX, IT'S BEEN REAL INTEREST-ING MEETING YOU.

I DON'T USUALLY GET TO BE THE SMARTEST GUY IN THE ROOM!
NOW WATCH CLOSELY.
I'M ABOUT TO MAKE ALL OUR PROBLEMS DISAPPEAR!
CRASH!

MAXX! ARE YOU OKAY?
MAXX FINE.
ISZ FINE TOO!
AND BURY MONSTER IN FLOOD OF LAVA!
DON'T WORRY! MAXX KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING!
MAXX WILL SWING OPEN BRASS TEMPLE DOORS...
MAXX, YOU IDIOT! IT'S A FLOOD OF TAPES!

UHH. I GUESS SHE'S NOT HOME.
YOU'RE SURE YOU GOT THE RIGHT PLACE?
OUCH! CAREFUL, SARAH. I'M A SENSITIVE PIECE OF CLAY!
WILL YOU SHUT UP?! I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY I'M DOING THIS!
MY WORLD SUCKS, BUT AT LEAST IT'S KIND OF NORMAL...
AND ONCE I GET RID OF YOU, IT'LL BE...
...SANE...
SARAH.
SARAH?
YOU STOPPED TALKING, SARAH. I CAN'T HEAR YOU.
I AM INSIDE, RIGHT?
YOU HAVEN'T PLAYED A JOKE ON OL' MR. CLAY, HAVE YOU?
CLICK
YOU BETTER NOT'VE!
SARAH!

WHAT A FUNNY LITTLE HOUSE! JUST LIKE THE ONE I MADE OUT OF CLAY AND POPSICLE STICKS WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL!
SHE'S STARTING TO REMEMBER! NOT NOW! IT'S TOO SOON!
IF WE ALL RETURN TO "NORMAL," I'LL PROBABLY END UP WITHOUT A HEAD!
BUT IF I NAIL THAT THING WITH A POISON DART...
...IT'LL BUY ME SOME TIME.


I REMEMBER NOW! I WAS A JUNGLE QUEEN! RULER OF A VAST DOMAIN! AND WHENEVER EVIL APPEARED I WOULD FIGHT IT.
IT'S JUST LIKE I REMEMBER IT!
NO! NO! NO!
AND I HAD A PET BUNNY. BUT HE DIED.
JOPRGOH!
NO TIME LEFT! I HAVE TO DO IT NOW!

SUDDENLY...

AND ELSEWHERE...
PITT! PULL ME UP. PITT!
THERE ARE A LOT OF ISZES DOWN THERE, PITT. DON'T JUST STARE AT THEM! PULL ME UP!
TIMMY, THEY ARE ALL... TIMMY...
BUT... WHERE ARE TIMMY'S...
...EYES?
WHAT? SNAP OUT OF IT, PITT!

GRAB MY HAND! PULL ME UP! DON'T JUST STAND THERE SAYING "TIMMY"!
KILL!
TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT ISSUE!
THE BURNING, BARBED RING OF MEMORY!